

Carter Picks Admiral for CIA

Combined News Services

Washington—President Carter said yesterday that he had picked an old Naval Academy classmate, Adm. Stansfield Turner, to be director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Turner, the commander in chief of NATO forces in southern Europe, has never served as an intelligence officer and therefore met Carter's requirement for an "outsider" to head the CIA, according to White House press secretary Jody Powell.

Carter was lavish in his praise of Turner, who served as brigade commander of the midshipmen in the Annapolis class of 1947, which was accelerated and graduated in 1946. Carter, however, said he had not known Turner while they were midshipmen.

"He was so far ahead of us that we never considered him competition or even a peer," Carter told a meeting of his Cabinet, according to deputy press secretary Rex Granum. Turner was 25th academically in the 820-member class. Carter was 59th. Newsday erroneously reported yesterday that Turner graduated a year ahead of Carter.

Administration officials said Carter wanted to name a CIA director who could be confirmed quickly and without much controversy by the Senate. Carter's first choice for the post, Theodore C. Sorensen, withdrew after it became clear he had little chance of being approved by the Senate Intelligence Committee.

Turner made a quick trip to Capitol Hill yesterday to meet some of the members of the intelligence committee. A spokesman for Sen. Adlai Stevenson (D-Ill.) said the senator was impressed with Turner and knew of no reason why the 53-year-old admiral would not be confirmed. Other members of the committee said they did not know Turner well enough to speculate about his chances of confirmation.

An intelligence source described Turner as an innovative admiral who should be able to solve many of the morale and administrative problems

that have been plaguing the CIA in recent years.

A Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University following his graduation from the Naval Academy, Turner earned a master's degree in philosophy, politics and economics at Oxford.

Powell said Turner had been a major user of intelligence reports in his role as a strategic planner. But the press secretary added that Turner had never been one of the intelligence officials the President has selected him to lead.

Within the Navy, Turner is known as something of a maverick. A friend said that in the opinion of some officers Turner has not had enough sea experience. Other Navy men are critical of Turner because he is not an advocate of enlarging U.S. carrier forces.

In 1972, when Turner became President of the Naval War College in Newport, R.I., it had the reputation of being something of a country club. The new president began what was called "The Turner Revolution," revamped the curriculum, and in less than 60 days the college had an academically superior program, men who worked for Turner recalled.

"There was a great gnashing of teeth from the old guard," one colleague remembered, "adding that some problems could have been avoided if Turner had done a little stroking."

"The Admiral isn't much good at stroking," he said.

Born in Highland Park, Ill., Turner attended Amherst College in 1941 before his appointment to the Naval Academy. He has been commander of NATO forces in southern Europe since Sept. 1, 1975. Previously, he was commander of the U.S. Second Fleet.

Carter also announced yesterday that he would retain Republican Jack M. Eckerd, who was appointed by Gerald Ford, as head of the General Services Administration. "The President feels that it is important that the top GSA job not be political in nature," Powell said.